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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 6 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you of the decision of the host country authorities denying the President of the National Assembly of People's Power of the Republic of Cuba and the other members of his delegation visas to attend the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament to be held from 7 to 9 September 2005 at United Nations Headquarters.

The fact that this Conference is being held at United Nations Headquarters testifies to the close cooperation that exists between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Moreover, I should like to recall that in paragraph 2 of resolution 59/19, which was adopted without a vote on 8 November 2004, the General Assembly "welcomes with satisfaction the decision to convene the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament ... in follow-up to the first such conference held in New York in 2000 in conjunction with the Millennium Assembly". In paragraph 3 of that same resolution the Assembly "calls upon the host country to extend the usual courtesies to participants of all parliamentary delegations of States Members of the United Nations at the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament".

I enclose note verbale No. 424, dated 6 September 2005, from the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Mission of the United States to the United Nations (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 56 (j) and 145 of the agenda of the fifty-ninth session.

(*Signed*) Orlando **Requeijo Gual**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 6 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Mission of the United States to the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the decision of the host country authorities denying the President of the National Assembly of People's Power of the Republic of Cuba and the other members of his delegation visas to attend the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, to be held from 7 to 9 September 2005 at United Nations Headquarters, in follow-up to the first such conference held in New York in 2000 in conjunction with the Millennium Assembly. The Cuban delegation was denied visas to attend that conference also. In both cases the pretext given for those unusual decisions was that World Conferences of Speakers of Parliament are private meetings not covered by the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations.

The applications for visas were submitted in accordance with the procedures established by the host country authorities; they were submitted to the United States Interests Section in Havana on 15 June 2005.

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations wishes to protest strongly at the arbitrary decision and to state that it disagrees completely with the pretexts given.

The Republic of Cuba fully agrees with the foundational principle of the Inter-Parliamentary Union which is that the latter is an international organization of universal character; as such it can hold meetings only if all its members and observers have been invited and if assurances have been given that they will be given visas.

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations wishes to remind the Mission of the United States to the United Nations that the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament is being organized jointly by the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union pursuant to resolution 59/19, which was adopted without a vote on 8 November 2004, and that in paragraph 2 thereof the General Assembly "Welcomes with satisfaction the decision to convene the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament ... in follow-up to the first such conference held in New York in 2000 in conjunction with the Millennium Assembly". In paragraph 3 of that same resolution the Assembly "Calls upon the host country to extend the usual courtesies to participants of all parliamentary delegations of States Members of the United Nations at the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament".

Moreover, in resolution 59/291 of 15 April 2005, the General Assembly decided to include a representative of the World Conference of Speakers of Parliament of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the list of speakers for the plenary meetings of its High-level Plenary Meeting.

The agenda of the second World Conference of Speakers of Parliament provides inter alia for statements by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the General Assembly.

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations urges the host country authorities to fulfil their international obligations as host to United Nations Headquarters, including those established by the spirit and letter of the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations.

New York, 6 September 2005